AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Previously Presented) A self-aligning structure for use in measuring the quality of an encoded indicium, comprising:

a hollow chamber comprising:

a first surface defining a first aperture, the first aperture representing a viewing area of an imager used to obtain an image of the encoded indicium;

a second surface defining a second aperture, the second aperture configured to support the imager in a position to obtain the image of the encoded indicium;

at least one source of illumination situated within the hollow chamber, the at least one source of illumination configured to illuminate the encoded indicium; and

an illumination control operatively coupled to control the at least one source of illumination;

the hollow chamber configured to be positioned adjacent the encoded indicium such that, when the encoded indicium is positioned within the viewing area, when an imager is supported in the second aperture, and when the at least one illumination source is properly controlled, the structure is self-aligned and the imager can obtain at least one image of the encoded indicium from which image the quality of the encoded indicium can be measured, wherein the hollow chamber is constructed in a plurality of mating sections, a first section comprising the first surface defining the first aperture representing the viewing area of the imager of the encoded indicium, and a second section comprising the second surface defining the second aperture configured to support the imager in the position to obtain the image of the encoded indicium.

2. (Original) The self-aligning structure according to claim 1, wherein the hollow chamber is configured to exclude extraneous illumination when the imager is present and the hollow chamber is positioned adjacent the encoded indicium.

3. (Original) The self-aligning structure according to claim 1, wherein the hollow chamber is configured to support the imager in a defined position relative to the encoded indicium.

4. (Original) The self-aligning structure according to claim 3, wherein the defined position comprises a defined distance.

5. (Original) The self-aligning structure according to claim 3, wherein the defined position comprises a defined angle.

6. (Previously Presented) The self-aligning structure according to claim 1, wherein said hollow chamber is constructed so that said second section is adapted to be disposed on top of said first section.

7. (Original) The self-aligning structure according to claim 1, wherein the hollow chamber is configured to remain mechanically stable when the imager is positioned within the second aperture.

8. (Original) The self-aligning structure according to claim 1, wherein the hollow chamber further comprises an optical sensor configured to receive illumination from the at least one source of illumination for the purpose of confirming an illumination characteristic provided by the at least one source of illumination.

9. (Original) The self-aligning structure according to claim 8, wherein the illumination characteristic provided by the at least one source of illumination is a characteristic selected from an illumination intensity at a selected time and an illumination wavelength.

Claims 10-23 Previously cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

24. (Previously Presented) A self-aligning structure for use in measuring the quality of an encoded indicium, comprising:

a hollow chamber comprising:

a first surface defining a first aperture, the first aperture representing a viewing area of an imager used to obtain an image of the encoded indicium;

a second surface defining a second aperture, the second aperture configured to support the imager in a position to obtain the image of the encoded indicium;

at least one source of illumination situated within the hollow chamber, the at least one source of illumination configured to illuminate the encoded indicium; and

an illumination control operatively coupled to control the at least one source of illumination;

the hollow chamber configured to be positioned adjacent the encoded indicium such that, when the encoded indicium is positioned within the viewing area, when an imager is supported in the second aperture, and when the at least one illumination source is properly controlled, the structure is self-aligned and the imager can obtain at least one image of the encoded indicium from which image the quality of the encoded indicium can be measured, wherein said self-aligning structure is configured to receive illumination from the at least one source of illumination for the purpose of confirming an illumination characteristic provided by the at least one source of illumination.

25. (Previously Presented) The self-aligning structure according to claim 24, wherein the illumination characteristic provided by the at least one source of illumination is a characteristic selected from an illumination intensity at a selected time and an illumination wavelength.

26. (Previously Presented) The self-aligning structure according to claim 24, wherein the illumination characteristic provided by the at least one source of illumination is an illumination intensity.

27. (Previously Presented) The self-aligning structure according to claim 24, wherein the illumination characteristic provided by the at least one source of illumination is an illumination wavelength.

28. (Previously Presented) The self-aligning structure according to claim 24, wherein the self-aligning sensor includes an optical sensor separate from said imager for receiving illumination for the at least one source of illumination for the purpose of confirming an illumination characteristic provided by the at least one source of illumination.

29. (Currently Amended) An image quality verifier system useful for verifying the quality of an encoded indicium comprising:

an imager for obtaining an image of the encoded indicium;

at least one source of illumination for illuminating said encoded indicium,

wherein said system includes a detector separate from said imager for detecting ~~is configured to detect~~ light from said at least one source of illumination for the purpose of confirming an illumination characteristic of said at least one source of illumination.

30. (Previously Presented) The self-aligning structure according to claim 29, wherein the illumination characteristic provided by the at least one source of illumination is a characteristic selected from an illumination intensity at a selected time and an illumination wavelength.

31. (Previously Presented) The self-aligning structure according to claim 29, wherein the illumination characteristic provided by the at least one source of illumination is an illumination intensity.

32. (Previously Presented) The self-aligning structure according to claim 29, wherein the illumination characteristic provided by the at least one source of illumination is an illumination wavelength.

Claim 33 Cancelled Without Prejudice or Disclaimer

34. (Previously Presented) The image quality verifier system according to claim 29, wherein said system is configured so that if said illumination characteristic confirmed by said system falls outside of a desired range, a signal for controlling said at least one source of illumination is communicated to said at least one source of illumination.

35. (Previously Presented) The image quality verifier system according to claim 29, further comprising a hollow chamber supporting said imager so that said imager is above said encoded indicium.

36. (Previously Presented) An image quality verifier system useful for verifying the quality of an encoded indicium, the system comprising:

a first imager for obtaining an image of said encoded indicium;

a second imager for obtaining an image of said encoded indicium;

at least one source of illumination for illuminating said encoded indicium; and

a structure comprising a hollow chamber, the hollow chamber configured to exclude extraneous illumination and comprising a first surface defining a first aperture, the first aperture representing a viewing area of the imager,

wherein said structure is configured to support, at any given time, one of said first imager and said second imager at a position above said encoded indicium, wherein said structure is further configured so that when said first imager is supported by said structure, said first imager is in such position to obtain an image of an indicium within said viewing area, and wherein said structure is further configured so that when said second imager is supported by said structure said second imager is in such position to obtain an image of an indicium within said viewing area.

37. (Previously Presented) The image quality verifier system of claim 36, wherein said first imager and said second imager have different working distances.

38. (Previously Presented) The image quality verifier system of claim 36, wherein said structure comprising said hollow chamber includes a hollow chamber having a first

section defining said first aperture and an interchangeable second section comprising either a first second section or an alternate section, the system being configured so that said first second section is mated to said first section for supporting said first imager, the system further being configured so that said alternate second section is mated to said first section for supporting said second imager.

39. (Previously Presented) The image quality verifier system of claim 36, wherein said hollow chamber of said structure supports one of said first imager or said second imager.

40. (Previously Presented) The image quality verifier system of claim 36, wherein each of said first and second imagers includes an illumination source so that said source of illumination of said system for illuminating said encoded indicium can be provided by said first or second imagers, whichever is supported by said structure.

41. (Previously Presented) A self-aligning structure for use in measuring the quality of an encoded indicium, comprising:

a hollow chamber comprising:

a first surface defining a first aperture, the first aperture representing a viewing area of an imager used to obtain an image of the encoded indicium;

a second surface defining a second aperture, the second aperture configured to support the imager in a position above said encoded indicium to obtain the image of the encoded indicium,

wherein said hollow chamber is provided in a form having first and second mating sections, the hollow chamber being configured so that said first surface defining said first aperture is included on said first mating section and said second surface defining said second aperture is included on said second mating section.

42. (Previously Presented) The self-aligning structure of claim 41, wherein said structure is provided in a form including an alternate first section of said hollow

chamber, and wherein said hollow chamber is configured so that said alternate first section can replace said first section.

43. (Previously Presented) The self-aligning structure of claim 41, wherein said structure is provided in a form including an alternate first section of said hollow chamber, wherein said hollow chamber is configured so that said alternate first section can replace said first section, and wherein the alternate first section has a viewing area defined for a different type of encoded indicium than said first section.

44. (Previously Presented) The self-aligning structure of claim 41, wherein said structure is provided in a form including an alternate second section of said hollow chamber, and wherein said hollow chamber is configured so that said alternate second section can replace said second section.

45. (Previously Presented) The self-aligning structure of claim 41, wherein said structure is provided in a form including an alternate second section of said hollow chamber, wherein said hollow chamber is configured so that said alternate second section can replace said second section, and wherein said alternate second section is configured to support a different imager than said second section.

46. (Previously Presented) An image quality verifier system useful for verifying the quality of an encoded indicium, comprising:

an imager for obtaining an image of the encoded indicium;

a source of illumination for illuminating said encoded indicium; and

a hollow chamber configured to exclude extraneous illumination and comprising a first surface defining a first aperture, the first aperture representing a viewing area of the imager, wherein said system is configured so that said imager is positioned at a position above said encoded indicia,

wherein said system is provided in a form such that a section of said hollow chamber including said first surface can be removed from a remainder of said hollow chamber and replaced with an alternate hollow chamber section.

47. (Previously Presented) The image quality verifier system of claim 46, wherein said alternate hollow chamber section is configured for use with a different type of encoded indicium than said section of hollow chamber including said first surface.

48. (Previously Presented) An image quality verifier system useful for verifying the quality of an encoded indicium, comprising:

an imager for obtaining an image of the encoded indicium, the imager comprising a sensor including one of (i) a linear array of photosensitive elements or (ii) two dimensional array of photosensitive element;

a source of illumination for illuminating said encoded indicium;

a hollow chamber configured to exclude extraneous illumination and comprising a first surface defining a first aperture, the first aperture representing a viewing area of the imager, the hollow chamber also having a second surface at a position above said first aperture, wherein said system is configured so that said imager is supported at a position that is above said encoded indicia and proximate said second surface of said hollow chamber that is configured to exclude extraneous illumination; and

an analysis module in wireless radio communication with said imager, said analysis module including a memory device and a programmed microprocessor, said analysis module in communication with said imager being configured to analyze an image to extract therefrom information regarding the quality of said encoded indicium.

49. (Previously Presented) The image quality verifier system of claim 48, wherein said source of illumination is incorporated in said imager.

50. (Previously Presented) The image quality verifier system of claim 48, wherein said source of illumination is incorporated in said chamber.

51. (Previously Presented) The image quality verifier system of claim 48, wherein said sensor is a two dimensional array of photosensitive elements.